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# 硕士学位论文

## Lexical Cohesion in English Public Political Speaking

英语公众政治演讲中的词汇衔接

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## Synopsis

Cohesion, as one of the most important components of a discourse, contributes much to the coherence of a discourse and has aroused the interests of many linguists and scholars ever since Halliday and Hasan published their famous work *Cohesion in English* in 1976. Cohesion relations can be divided into two categories – grammatical cohesion and lexical cohesion. The effect of lexical cohesion can be achieved by different lexical choices in discourses. Lexical cohesion is considered as the most important one in various means. Many scholars have done significant researches on it. However, few of the studies focus on how lexical cohesion is used in English public political speaking. Thus, this paper is aimed at investigating how lexical cohesion is applied in this register.

With the fast development of the society, speaking well in a public setting has become an important part of living. Skill in public speaking has long been recognized as part of the equipment of every educated man and woman. As a subcomponent of English public speaking, English public political speaking is an important social-cultural phenomenon in the west. It is one that the speaker, usually on behalf of a certain class, society, or party, makes to audience on some important matters and relationships home and abroad. This type of public speaking has a wide range of application. Study on English public political speaking will help speakers learn to make successful speeches in public. And lexical cohesion analysis on English public political speaking will assist students to prepare good public speaking with the aid of lexical cohesive devices.

The whole paper is made up of five chapters: an introduction of the whole thesis, a literature review of the theoretical framework, an introduction of English public political speaking, a study of lexical cohesion in English public political speaking and a conclusion of the thesis. Based on three most influential taxonomies classified by

Halliday & Hasan (1976), Hasan (1984) and Hoey (1991) respectively, a refined taxonomy of lexical cohesion is put forward, and 40 famous English public political speeches are analyzed. The distribution of different lexical cohesive devices in English public political speaking is investigated by examining the frequency of each device in all the samples. A comparison of results with previous analyses is made to see how lexical cohesion is applied differently in different registers, ultimately, leading to an awareness of how we should appropriately use lexical cohesion to make successful public speeches.

**Key Words:** lexical cohesion; English public political speaking; taxonomy; frequency

## 摘要

衔接，作为语篇的一个重要组成部分，对语篇连贯起着至关重要的作用，因此也引起许多语言学家的兴趣。随着韩礼德和哈桑于 1976 年发表了著作《英语的衔接》，衔接一词在篇章语言学界广受关注及肯定。衔接可以分成两大类：语法衔接和词汇衔接。词汇衔接是通过对语篇中的词汇选择形成的。词汇衔接历来都被认为是最为重要的一种衔接形式。许多学者已经对其进行了大量研究。然而，少有研究专注于词汇衔接如何使用在不同的语域中。因此，本文致力于研究词汇衔接在英语公众政治语篇中的使用。

随着社会的飞速发展，在公众场合进行演讲已经成为现代人生活中不可或缺的一部分。对于公众演讲技巧的掌握也已经成为一种时代要求。作为英语公众演讲的一个分支，英语公众政治演讲是西方社会中一种源远流长的社会文化现象。所谓英语公众政治演讲是指一个演讲者通常代表某一政党、阶级、国家等就某些重要事件在国内外对某一听众群发表的演讲。此类公众演讲应用范围广泛。关于英语公众政治演讲的研究将有助于演讲者成功地在公众场合讲演。而对于英语公众政治演讲的词汇衔接分析将帮助学生们学会如何使用不同的词汇衔接手段准备一份成功的演讲稿。

本文由 5 个部分构成：引言，文献综述，英语公众政治演讲的相关阐述，本研究以及结论。在本研究中，基于分别由韩礼德&哈桑 (1976)，哈桑 (1984) 和 侯伊 (1991) 提出的三个最具影响力关于词汇衔接的分类，作者进行概括与总结，并得出一种新的较为简洁的分类作为对 40 篇著名的英语公众政治演讲语篇中的词汇衔接的使用进行分析的依据。通过统计不同词汇衔接手段在这 40 篇英语公众政治演讲语篇中的使用频率，本文详尽描述了这些词汇衔接手段在政治演讲语篇中的分布情况并阐述了其原因。本研究结果与其它研究结果进行的比较表明不同语域中的词汇衔接使用情况，即不同词汇衔接手段的分布是不同的。这将有助于我们意识到词汇衔接的重要性并学习如何恰当地使用词汇衔接进行成功的公众演讲。

**关键词：**词汇衔接；英语公众政治演讲；分类；频率

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## **Chapter 1 Introduction**

### **1.1 Research Orientation**

In the past three decades, there has been a remarkable growth in interest towards the analysis of English written discourse, and abundant attempts have been made to reveal and understand the factors that accompany the process of text comprehension and production. One of the areas that received outstanding attention in theoretical studies and empirical investigations is the study of coherence and cohesion. However, despite the great number of the two notions, there is still little agreement concerning the contribution they make to global text quality. Looking into the question of cohesion in particular, we can find an even more debated area, that is, the role of lexical cohesion.

Public speaking refers to a continuous speech delivered by a public speaker before a large audience about his systematic suggestions and propositions in spoken language with the help of facial expression, sighs and body gestures and the strong emotions, for the purpose to move, to inspire, to encourage, to persuade the audience or even to teach them something. As we know, the ability of public speaking is something indispensable for common people nowadays in the society. When people come to contact with each other, they must be able to introduce themselves, to show their intention, to express their feelings, and to ask the others to help them. That is the basic speaking ability. Today, with the development of science and technology, everything changes at a tremendous speed. The competition in the world becomes more and more fierce. For individuals, they have to meet more and more rigid challenges one after another. They can't just wait for the opportunity in a lazy way; instead, they must strive for every possible chance for themselves by recommending them to the position at home and abroad for a better personal growth. In a sense, anyone who wants to succeed in life should not neglect the ability of public speaking. For country leaders, they make public speaking at home and abroad frequently for the purpose of

explaining something to the national people to get their support and cooperation or for the purpose of introducing the country's foreign policy to the foreigners in order to acquire some successful cooperation for the good of the country. Therefore, the study of political public speaking can't be waited any longer. Besides, political speaking, generally, has three purposes: to convince people to take action that the speaker wants them to take, to change radically their attitudes or beliefs and to butters or weaken their current attitudes or beliefs. The realization of these goals requires a strict logic thinking, well-knit organization, careful use of language and skillful presentation. Thus, to study the language, more precisely, the vocabulary used in political speeches as well as how these lexical factors help to organize the text is of great help for us.

It is exactly the wonders of whether lexical cohesion take a role in English public political speaking – this time-honored activity in western countries as well as how it plays a role in these political speeches that motivated the current study.

## **1.2 Aims and Significance**

The aim of this paper is to study the application of lexical cohesion in English public political speaking.

Based on the lexical cohesion theory proposed by Halliday and Hasan (1976) and the new approach to lexical studies developed by Hoey (1991), the present research attempts to study the distribution of lexical cohesive devices in the written discourses of English public political speaking with the intention of contributing to an easier access to learning how to understand and how to make English public speaking. By taking account of the patterning of lexical devices in the samples of English political speaking, we can see that lexical cohesion does play a significant role in the organization and understanding of English public political speaking, thus assists students to learn how to make successful English public speaking with the help of lexical cohesive devices.

At present, abundant research has been conducted in the study of lexical cohesion in general. However, regarding the application of lexical cohesion in certain register, English public political speaking in particular, the number of empirical investigations is very scarce. As for English public political speaking, a great number of studies have been done in this field since making speeches in public has been a part of our daily life. But, most of the studies just focus on investigating its stylistic features. And few researchers have studied English public political speaking by using the method of cohesion analysis. Therefore, lexical cohesion in English public political speaking needs and deserves investigating. The present study probes into analyzing how lexical cohesion is applied in English public political speaking, which is of significance to others' future studies in this field.

Besides, while studying lexical cohesion in English public political speaking, we have to classify different lexical cohesive devices. After a brief introduction of three most influential taxonomies proposed by Halliday & Hasan (1976), Hasan (1984) and Hoey (1991), the author finds that there is considerable overlap among the categories identified. Therefore, based on the three taxonomies, the author brings out a summarized and refined taxonomy which is to be used in the current study.

Another novel outcome of this study is that it further affirms the results from previous studies: lexical cohesion is not only related to one's writing quality and oral communication, but also intertwined with the register of texts. By comparing the result of the present study and the findings from one previous research on lexical cohesion in law texts, the author finds that in these two different registers the lexical cohesive devices are distributed in different ways, which is mostly because of the register difference.

### **1.3 Data Collection and Research Procedure**

Data collection and the analysis of the empirical study are presented as follows:

1. About samples: the samples we take in this paper are 40 written discourses of

English public political speaking well known in humankind's history, made by politicians of great significance, such as John F. Kennedy, Martin Luther King, Richard M. Nixon, General Douglas MacArthur, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, and so on. These samples are chosen randomly from *经典英文演讲100篇* downloaded from <http://www.anxz.com/down/2848.html>. The average length of the selected data is around 2000 words per speech, the shortest being 698 words and the longest 4035.

2. Based on the categorization of lexical cohesion for the present research, the thesis is to identify the lexical cohesive ties in each of the sample texts. A sample analysis on John F. Kennedy's Inaugural Address is presented to show how the investigation on the application of lexical cohesion in these 40 pieces of English public political speaking is conducted.

3. Data obtained from all the samples are made into histograms and pie charts, with its percentages in cohesion amount in total. By comparing the percentages, we can get the basic idea of the distribution of lexical cohesive devices as well as the most frequently-used lexical cohesive expressions in the written discourses of English public political speaking.

4. The data from previous studies are compared with the data from the present study to see the difference of the application of lexical cohesion in different registers. The reasons for the difference are illustrated, followed by some pedagogical implications.

## **1.4 Structure of the Research**

The thesis is divided into five chapters. Chapter One is the introduction. It outlines the orientation and the purpose of the present research, data collection, research design and basic structure of the whole paper. Chapter Two, the literature review part presents a systematic and critical overview of the current study of lexical cohesion which is of direct relevance to the present research, and introduces Halliday and Hasan's research on cohesion and coherence and a new system of discourse



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